

The Ramtop

The Publication of the Greater Cleveland Timex-Sinclair Users Group

Spring

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Letter from the President

Here it is, another issue of the Ramtop! Where does the time go? It seems to go faster each month and year. I hope you all are doing great. As you know, last issue we announced the SPECTRUM emulator for the IBM PC (and clones, of course). Since then Ron Hopkins-Lutz has translated more of the Spanish manual and we have found out that the emulator really does need at least an AT type PC to run with any speed at all and it will not run at all on a computer with the NEC V-20 processor. This was a popular replacement for the 8088/8086. It ran faster but it chokes on the emulator. It was also noted that a 386 rated at 33 MHz or better be used. I have a 286 (12MHz) and it ran OK but slower than a Spectrum runs by a fair amount. I think the only one in our group locally that has a 386/33MHz is Ted. We will have to see how it runs on his.

We have been doing a lot better with dues this year but I believe there are still a few members that need to check their dates or if you are not receiving the Ramtop, ask me at a meeting. As you know, without dues, our club will be in pretty poor shape since we will have no means to communicate with one another through our news letter. WE have cut costs drastically in this area and as you can see, cut the size but the content is still informative and interesting mostly due to the efforts of Tom Simon, Ted Knyszek, Max Shoenfeld and those of you that are contributing articles! Keep up the good work! We DO need more articles though! Send in a program listing even if we have seen it before.

We need to make our meetings more interesting. If you have any ideas, let me know. I feel that Tom Simon had the right idea when he said that we had have some sort of demo or program at least at the East side meeting each month. I now have a small device called a "video sender". It will transmit a composite color image and audio to channel 15. This means we can plug the composite video from a 2068 (or 1000 or QL) into it and send it to a larger TV. I was shocked at the video quality. I could tell very little difference from plugging the composite into a monitor or sending it to a TV. The point is, if you have a program of any interest, I can use a TV such as at the west side instead of you having to drag along a monitor. We could also maybe impose on Gene or Tom to bring their larger portable TV. Anyway, We should have some sort of planed agenda at least once a month.

One sad note I must bring up. Tom Jennins from the East side found out that he has a cancerous tumor on his lung that is at the present time, inoperable. He is now undergoing radiation and chemo therapy and I know we all wish him the best! Tom, you will be in our prayers! Tom is taking a positive attitude about this and knowing Tom, he has a good chance of licking it! If you have any knowledge of any of our members taking ill, let me know so we can call and wish them well! That's it for now! Take care to you all! JGD

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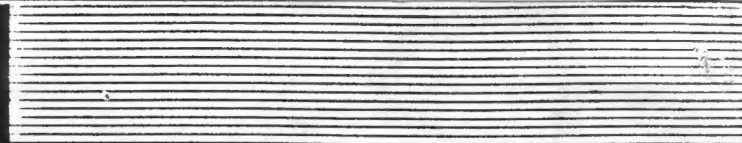
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GEOWORKS PRO



GeoWorks Pro is touted as an alternative to Microsoft Windows. While GeoWorks may not be a replacement for Windows, it is a very interesting and useful software package. GeoWorks is a combination of two products, an integrated software package, ala Microsoft Works, and a multitasking desktop environment similar to Windows. GeoWorks applications emphasize the use of graphics on the PC and in this respect, the results very good. GeoWorks will run on very modest IBM compatible computers. It will supposedly multi task on an XT class machine with as little as 512K of RAM. It also support all graphic adapters from lowly CGA or Hercules to Super VGA. The program requires 7MB of hard disk storage. On my 386SX, GeoWorks runs at a very acceptable speed.

GeoWorks applications are "what you see is what you get" or WYSIWYG. When you type a document, the fonts, type sizes, and letter spacing closely resemble what you will get when you send the document to your printer. GeoWorks supports 420 printers, and the resulting print outs are some of the best I've seen from a dot matrix printer. I tried printing on a nine pin dot matrix printer, and the results looked as good as a twenty-four pin printer. GeoWorks also supports laser printers and PostScript printers. It will print in color, but only on PostScript printers.

The main applications that come with GeoWorks Pro are GeoWrite, a word processor, GeoDraw, a drawing and page layout program, and the operating environment, GeoManager. Other programs that come with GeoWorks are a true multitasking but weak communications package, GeoComm, a limited database program, GeoDex, and an appointment scheduler. Other "appliances" or utility programs include a nice banner maker, a Tetris clone, and a solitaire game.

GeoWrite and GeoDraw are the strongest applications of the GeoWorks package. GeoWrite and GeoDraw both feature seven scalable fonts. Laying out a page with either program is very simple since the results you will get are very similar to what you see on the screen. Setting margins and text justification are a breeze. GeoWrite even supports multi column printing, landscape (sideways) printing, and a large variety of different paper sizes. While GeoWrite has a fairly good spell checker, it lacks a thesaurus, a minor oversight for most writers.

GeoDraw makes working with text and graphics a joy. While you have to work with it to appreciate it, GeoDraw lets you work with bits of graphics so that each graphic item can be reshaped, rotated, and superimposed over text and graphics. Within a few minutes, you can be making good looking graphics. I found this a pleasant change from other graphics programs that I have worked with.

One other major selling point of GeoWorks Pro is that it contains a spreadsheet program, Quatro Pro Special Edition. Quatro Pro is a Borland product, but it isn't a GeoWorks program, meant to multi task. Instead, it works under DOS and GeoWorks provides a Quatro Pro file viewer that works within the GeoWorks environment. The Quatro Pro viewer lets you import spreadsheets and charts GeoWrite and GeoDraw.

GeoWorks comes with its own memory managers, printer spooler and other utilities it needs to work. It works beautifully with DR DOS 6.0's task switcher, TaskMax.

Where GeoWorks is weakest is in its communication package. While it does multitask, it doesn't emulate a VT100 terminal very well, and it supports only the aged Xmodem file transfer protocol. If GeoWorks would get GeoComm working like I imagine it should, (like Procomm Plus) GeoWorks would be a killer program. One other very annoying problem with GeoWorks is the way that GeoDex prints labels. The labels are beautiful, but you can't print just selected labels; instead, it prints out the entire GeoDex mailing list. There is a work around, but it would have been easier to get it right the first time.

Should you buy GeoWorks? If you are looking for a multitasking operating environment and several useful applications to work within the environment and your needs aren't too demanding, GeoWorks is a winner. The major shortcoming of GeoWorks is that there are no third party programs made to take advantage of the GeoWorks environment. GeoWorks is releasing a software development kit shortly so that GeoWorks compatible applications may soon be forthcoming. A new version of GeoWorks should be released later this year that will remedy some of the weaknesses in its applications. In particular, I'm hoping that it will have a much stronger communications program and allow multitasking DOS programs. GeoWorks lists for \$199.00 but is available everywhere for about \$150. If you are just curious, GeoWorks has a working model of the program for \$9.95 with almost all of the features of the full blown program; lacking only the ability to save files. The purchase price is refunded if you buy GeoWorks Pro. Recently, GeoWorks has started selling its word processor, drawing program, and desktop environment separately as its office series of programs. The programs sell for about \$55 apiece. I think that most users would want to buy at least GeoWrite and GeoDraw together, for a total of \$110. I think that the extra \$40 for the complete GeoWorks Pro package is probably a better deal.

David Hoshor



NOTES AND STUFF

Max's 2068 Listing

Well Michelangelo's birthday passed (March 6) and only one of our members had the virus named for him. Those of you with PC's be sure to check your disks. Fortunately no one has decided to write a Sinclair Virus, although with the PC Spectrum emulator the possibility now exists. Ron Hopkins-Lutz has uploaded the Spectrum emulator to Genie and I uploaded this program to Compuserve. Thanks to Greg Dupuy and everyone else who helped in making this program available to other users.

This issue is largely composed with Geoworks by David Hoshor on a 386 SX and with an article by him too. We need more contributions to the newsletter. Max Schoenfeld submitted the program listing printed here for the 2068. I had a program ready to go but wasn't able to get a bug out, so it will have to wait until next issue. Andre Baune has provided some more information and another couple of excellent illustrations done on his trusty ZX-81. If you want the listings for Andre's drawings, send his a self addressed stamped envelope or a dollar to Andre Baune, 304 Scott, Chateauguay, Quebec, Canada J6J 4H5.

We need your contributions. If you do not do anything else try to contribute to the functioning of our group either with a program or an article for the newsletter. We'd like to hear more from other users in other clubs.

```

5 REM "instr"
10 PRINT "Line 100 first tells
the program how many frames
to use to convert the drawing
and then how many sides to the drawing."
20 PRINT "Line 110 first gives
the PLOT coordinates followed
by the DRAW coordinates for
the original drawing."
30 PRINT "In a similar fashion
Line 120 gives the coordinate
s for the end drawing."
40 PRINT "Note that you must have
the same number of lines in the
original and end drawings. You
may have to draw a line in two
segments to make the number of
lines equal."

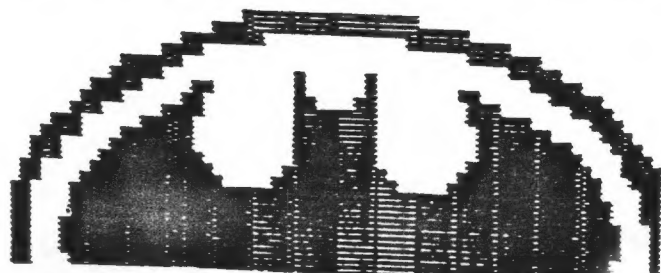
```

```

1 REM "anim 2"
100 DATA 20,6
105 REM
data statements contain the
coordinates of the plot and
draw statements
110 DATA 80,0,40,0,40,0,0,160,-
40,0,-40,0,0,-160
120 DATA 80,0,80,0,40,40,-40,40
,-80,0,-40,40,-40
130 REM
set up m/c
140 GO SUB 520
150 REM
sets dual screen mode
160 RANDOMIZE USR 60000: OUT 25
5,1
170 RESTORE 100
180 REM
initializes variables
190 READ frames
200 READ points
205 LET points=points +1
210 DIM A(points,2)
220 DIM B(points,2)
230 FOR A=1 TO points
240 READ A(A,1): READ A(A,2)
250 NEXT A
260 FOR A=1 TO points
270 READ B(A,1): READ B(A,2)
280 NEXT A
290 REM
makes the "B" array contain
the offset of each plot-dra
point
300 FOR A=1 TO points
310 LET B=(B(A,1)-A(A,1))
320 LET B(A,1)=B/(frames-1)
330 LET B=(B(A,2)-A(A,2))
340 LET B(A,2)=B/(frames-1)
350 NEXT A
360 REM
draws each frame of the
picture
370 FOR A=1 TO frames
380 CLS
390 PLOT A(1,1),A(1,2)
400 FOR C=2 TO points
410 DRAW A(C,1),A(C,2)
420 NEXT C
430 OUT 255,0: RANDOMIZE USR 60
441: OUT 255,1
440 REM
changes coordinates for
next frame
450 FOR B=1 TO points
460 LET A(B,1)=A(B,1)+B(B,1)
470 LET A(B,2)=A(B,2)+B(B,2)
480 NEXT B
490 NEXT A
500 OUT 255,0
510 STOP
520 REM
pokes machine code
530 RESTORE 600
540 LET C=0
550 FOR A=60000 TO 60052
560 READ B: POKE A,B
570 LET C=C+B
580 NEXT A
590 IF C<>7805 THEN STOP
600 RETURN
610 DATA 62,123,243,245,219,255
,203,255,211,255,219,244,50,72,20
3,62,1,211,244,241,205,142,14,6
2,123,50,194,92,58,72,238,211,24
4,219,255,203,191,211,255,251,0,
33,0,64,17,0,96,1,0,27,237,176,2
01
9998 STOP
9999 SAVE "anim" LINE 1

```

ZOWEE!

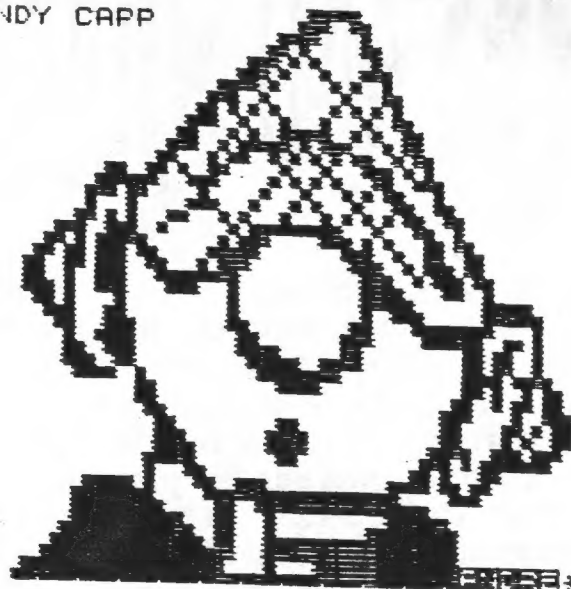


Fine

ANDY CAPP



DAGWOOD
BUMSTEAD



I will send (FREE) to you the PROGRAM
and DATA of the picture(s) seen in this
issue if you send me the NAME of the
character depicted.

The little computer that could
More graphics by Andre

ZX Strikes back



The Ramtop



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Really
First Class